RPR Skills Test

Required Information Packet

- Rules and Regulations
- What is an Error?
- Cancelation Policy
- Cancelation Form

RULES AND REGULATIONS:
RPR AND RMR SKILLS TESTS

The RPR and RMR Skills Tests are the exclusive property of the National Court Reporters Association. Copyright law protects the Skills Tests. No part of these tests may be copied or reproduced in part or whole by any means whatsoever, including memorization, unless previously authorized by NCRA. The theft or attempted theft of a Skills Test is punishable as a crime.

Candidates are prohibited from using electronic devices of any kind once they have signed in at the test site, with the exception of your writer and computer. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, audio sync, digital recorders, and any other audio recording and/or screen capture tools. Chief Examiners have the right to inspect a candidate's equipment, including computer settings and desktop recycle bin, before and after the test.

By registering for the test, you have acknowledged that you understand and agree to abide by these procedures. Failure to follow these or any NCRA procedures may result in your automatic failure and being barred from taking NCRA-administered tests for a minimum of three (3) testing cycles or permanently depending on the nature of the violation. NCRA members may also be suspended or expelled from the association.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SKILLS TEST CANDIDATES

- You must bring a photo I.D. with you to gain entrance to the exam. Candidates not arriving with identification will be denied entrance to the exam.
- Arrive at the reporting time specified on your Exam Site Information Page. Candidates who arrive late will be denied entrance to the exam.
- Cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices must be turned off, not just muted, and stored until after you leave the testing site.
- If your steno machine has a test mode, the test mode must be used. If you do not know if test mode is available on your steno machine, please contact the manufacturer or your user manual.
- If your machine has an SD card, please be sure it is blank. The Chief Examiner may require you to format the SD card if you are unable to delete the specified test files. Do not send your SD card to NCRA.
- If you have a mechanical problem during the exam, please remain calm and sit quietly. Do not do anything that may distract the other candidates. If the mechanical problem does not prevent you from writing, please continue to write the exam. You will be instructed how to proceed after the audio portion of the exam has finished playing.
- Candidates are prohibited from viewing or handling another candidate's test material. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in automatic failure and may result in a limitation of the candidate's further participation in NCRA tests.
- Candidates are responsible for providing all necessary equipment including a computer, steno machines, printers, software, computers, security keys, data storage devices (blank 3.5 double-sided high-density formatted diskette, compact disk or flash drive/USB drive) and labels, cables, extension cords (minimum 16-foot recommended), adapters, and surge protector/power strips.
- If you are submitting a data storage device with your test, make sure it is saved as a readable file (ASCII, pdf, Word, plain text file). Do NOT save it in your CAT software format.
- Use of the candidate's own equipment is strictly at the candidate's own risk. Use of any on-site equipment, if available (RPR and RMR only), is also at the candidate's own risk.

RULES AND REGULATIONS:
RPR AND RMR SKILLS TESTS

- Candidates should not expect or receive instruction on how to operate their own or any on-site equipment (RPR and RMR only). This includes how to save and/or print your notes and transcript.
- Do not include the one minute practice test in your final saved/printed transcript.
- The site, the Chief Examiner, and NCRA assume no responsibility should any equipment not perform properly or be dropped, stolen, knocked off a desk, etc.

RPR AND RMR CANDIDATES

A. Skills candidates may use a printed Merriam Webster's Dictionary or electronic dictionary (spell-check) installed on their computer.

B. RPR and RMR candidates may pass each leg one at a time to earn credit for that leg.

C. RPR and RMR candidates are allowed 1 ¼ hours (75 minutes) per leg for transcription.

D. Candidates who do not transcribe must sign the Affidavit of Non-Transcription. Please do not sign the Affidavit of Non-Transcription if you have already passed a leg(s).

E. Skills candidates are permitted to use CAT. Refer to your Exam Site Information Page for site-specific equipment requirements.

F. Realtime translation is allowed in the dictation room. The screen must be situated in such a manner so that the display will not be visible to other candidates.

G. No audio assist of any kind is permitted during test dictation or during transcription.

H. All candidates must follow the rules and regulations on equipment as outlined below.

I. All candidates are required to place the following items in their Skills Test envelope and hand them in to the Chief Examiner. Do NOT seal the envelope.

•Writer Disk or writer cassette labeled with 10-digit exam ID# (if test files cannot be deleted and/or if CAT was used)

•Final transcript with 10-digit exam ID# on top of each page if test is being administered by CD.

•Paper notes labeled with 10-digit exam ID# (notes may be compared with final transcript)

•Candidates using paperless writers must be prepared to print their notes.

J. All candidates who used a CAT system with a memory must delete all forms of the test before leaving the transcription room.

K. All transcripts are graded according to the NCRA Grading Guidelines "*What Is An Error*?"

L. Headphones are prohibited while transcribing the test.

M. Use your NCRA ID number and the following abbreviations as the file names when making your new steno and test files: L for Literary, JC for Jury Charge and T for Testimony. An example is 12345RPRLnotes and 12345RPRL.

N. You must write your NCRA ID at the beginning of your steno notes if you test is being administered by CD.

O. Use of all capitals or all lowercase will result in an automatic failure of the exam. There will be no exceptions.

RULES AND REGULATIONS:
RPR AND RMR SKILLS TESTS

RPR/RMR EQUIPMENT

1. Additional transcription time will not be allowed for equipment failure, accidental erasing of computer files or forgotten items (e.g., cables, power cords). Double check to make sure you have saved your file(s) correctly if you are submitting a data storage device.
2. Candidates are required to delete their note/memory file from their steno machine. If your steno machine does not use a disk, e.g. a RAM memory, eliminate any jobs that may be in your steno machine's memory as you will be asked to reformat your steno machine's memory after the exam. If you do not reformat your steno machine's memory, your steno machine will be impounded by the Chief Examiner.

RPR/RMR TRANSCRIPTS

- In every sense, the Skills Test transcripts must be the work products of the individual candidate.
- Candidates are responsible for producing their own transcripts without assistance including saving and/or printing.
- Candidates must perform their own translating and editing functions.
- Each test leg needs to be written as a separate file.

What is an Error?

Grading Guidelines for the RPR and RMR Skills Test

Revised January 2005 (style changed August 2007)

- The RPR skills tests consists of five minutes of professionally recorded audio dictation material at 180 wpm literary (RMR=200 wpm), 200 jury charge (RMR=240 wpm), and 225 testimony (RMR=260 wpm). Passing for all RPR and RMR skills tests is 95%.

- Allowable number of errors:

	RPR	RMR
Literary	45	50
Jury Charge	50	60
Testimony	57	65

- The RPR and RMR Skills Test is developed based on the rules of punctuation set forth in *The Gregg Reference Manual* and *Merriam Webster's Dictionary.*

- **Automatic Fails:**
  - Handwritten transcripts
  - Use of all capitals, or all lowercase
  - Single-spaced transcripts

- The following list of errors will be used as a guideline for correcting tests. In all cases of dispute, the grader, guided by all the principles set forth herein, will render the final decision, subject to appeal to the Chair of the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters. Please see the bottom of the page for an explanation of errors.

ERROR GUIDELINES

(D=dictated, T=translated)

1. a) Each wrong word.

(D): I didn't see the car until we hit.
(T): I didn't notice[2] any[2] vehicle[2] until we hit. *3Errors*

NOTE: Each wrong and/or substituted word counts as only 1 error not 2.

b) Each plural read as singular and vice versa.

(D): Let me check the dates.
(T): Let me check the date[2]. *1 Error*

c) Each present-tense verb read as past tense and vice versa.

(D): In other words, you acted as a clerk.
(T): In other words, you act[2] as a clerk. *1 Error*

2. Each omitted word.

(D): I drove and he slept.
(T): I drove[7] . He slept. *1 Error*

NOTE: The essential error is the omission of the word "and." No error for the period, no error for the capital H.

3. Each added word.

(D): Yes.
(T): Yes, sir[9]. *1 Error*

4. Transposition.

NOTE: If one or more words are transposed from one part of the sentence to another, each transposed word is an error.

(D): Then when he started
(T): When he then[5] started *1 Error*

(D): Before I went to Chicago, I went home.
(T): I[5] went[5] home[5] before I went to Chicago. *3 Errors*

5. Each misspelled word (including typographical errors or strikeovers).

(D): hospital
(T): hotpital[8] *1 Error*

(D): That doctor is not my doctor.
(T): That docter[8] is not my docter[8]. *2 Errors*

(D): It would come in time.
(T): It would come ~~i~~n[14] time. *1 Error*

(D): It would come in time.
(T): It would come ~~come~~ in time. *0 Errors*

6. Each wrong name.

(D): Mr. Smith followed me home.
(T): Mr. Jones[2] followed me home. *1 Error*

To assist with grading, the errors listed in this document have been coded as follows:

1. *Extra/missing space*
2. *Wrong word*
3. *Hyphen*
4. *Replaced word*
5. *Transposed word*
6. *Missing/wrong punctuation*
7. *Missing word*
8. *Misspelling*
9. *Added word*
10. *Capitalization*
11. *Untranslate*
12. *Style*
13. *Contraction*
14. *Typographical error*

What is an Error?

Grading Guidelines for the RPR and RMR Skills Test

Revised January 2005 (style changed August 2007)

7. Each omitted period or comma that is required by the rules of punctuation.

(D): I couldn't, I was asleep.
(T): I couldn't[6] I was asleep. *1 Error*

(D): It results from a misinterpretation of several cases which Brown cites. In Grant v. United the point was made.

(T): It results from a misinterpretation of several cases which Brown cites[6] in Grant v. United. The point was made. *1 Error*

(D): September 20, 1993, will be the first day of classes.
(T): September 20 [6]1993, will be the first day of classes. *1 Error*

(D): If you read the note, you will see he lied.
(T): If you read the note [6]you will see he lied. *1 Error*

8. Each obvious question mark omitted from an interrogative sentence or added to a noninterrogative sentence.

(D): Q. What is your name?
(T): Q. What is your name. [6] *1 Error*

9. Each contraction transcribed as two words and vice versa.

(D): I don't know.
(T): I do not[13] know. *1 Error*

10. Each omission of Q and A.

(D): A. Do you mean now?
Q. Yes.
(T): A. Do you mean now?
__ [6] Yes. *1 Error*

(D): A. Do you mean now?
Q. Yes.
A. That is right.
(T): A. Do you mean now?
__ [6]That is right. *3 Errors*

NOTE: One error for the omitted Q. One error for the omitted Yes[7], one error for the omitted A[7].

11. Each incorrect number or money figure represented by a word.

(D): May one, nineteen fifty one.
(T): May 1, $18^{2}15^{2,7}$. *3 Errors rather than 1*
(T): May 2^{2}, $18^{2}15^{2,7}$ *4 Errors*

(D): One hundred forty three dollars, sixty cents.
(T): _[6]143.60 (omitted $ sign) *1 Error*
(T): $142^{2}.40^{2}$ *2 Errors*
(T): 143.06^{2} *1 Error*

12. Each omitted capital letter clearly needed.

(T): cleveland[10], Ohio *1 Error*

13. Corrections made with pen or pencil.

14. Words used in place of an acronym and vice versa.

(D): CIA
(T): Central[2] Intelligence[2] Agency[2] *3 Errors*

(D): I have worked for the FBI for three years.
(T): I have worked for the $C^{2}I^{2}A^{2}$ for three years. *3 Errors*

15. Each compound word written as two words and vice versa.

(D): The high school dropout rate has increased the last two years.
(T): The high school drop[1] out rate has increased the last two years. *1 Error*

These Will Not Be Counted As Errors:

A. Misplaced commas (except listed in Error No. 7)
B. Optional capitalization of certain words (e.g. President, State).
C. X-ing out of errors if done by typewriter. (No pen or pencil.)
D. In dates, ordinal numbers for cardinal numbers and vice versa: either May 1 or May 1st; May 22 or May 22nd.
E. Spelling names that sound alike.
   (D): Harley Schmidt
   (T): Hardey Schmitt
F. Punctuation which was part of a drop.
G. Missing hyphens.
H. Placing "The Court:" at the beginning of the Jury Charge exam.
I. Dictated words or phrases not in the dictionary.

To assist with grading, the errors listed in this document have been coded as follows:

1. Extra/missing space	*4. Replaced word*	*7. Missing word*	*10. Capitalization*	*13. Contraction*
2. Wrong word	*5. Transposed word*	*8. Misspelling*	*11. Untranslate*	*14. Typographical error*
3. Hyphen	*6. Missing/wrong punctuation*	*9. Added word*	*12. Style*	

SKILLS EXAM
CANCELLATION AND SITE CHANGE POLICY

SKILLS TEST CANCELATION POLICY:

- Candidates must submit a completed Exam Cancellation and Site Change form to NCRA prior to the cancellation deadline**.** Cancellation deadlines are listed on the Exam Cancellation and Site Change form.
- Cancellation requests must be submitted in writing via U.S. mail or fax, or emailed to testing@ncrahq.org. The Exam Cancellation and Site Change form is available at www.ncra.org/testing.
- The balance of the registration fee will be refunded less a **$35 non-refundable processing fee**.

If a skills test cancellation request is submitted to NCRA after the cancellation deadline, the candidate must be able to provide back-up documentation of the extenuating circumstance which prevented the candidate from taking their exam. Examples of adequate back-up documentation include, but are not limited to:

- Doctors' notes
- Obituaries
- Church bulletins

If a candidate is able to provide sufficient documentation, a refund of the registration fee less a **$35 non-refundable processing fee** will be issued. If a candidate is unable to document the extenuating circumstance no refund will be issued.

Note: No-show candidates will forfeit their entire registration fee, unless able to provide adequate back-up documentation of an extenuating circumstance **within 30 days of the exam**.

SKILLS TEST SITE CHANGE POLICY:

Important: NCRA cannot guarantee a site change, as the site requested may be full. Site changes are final ONLY when candidate receives an updated exam confirmation from NCRA. It is the responsibility of the candidate to verify his or her exam site prior to test day.

- Candidates must submit a completed Exam Cancellation and Site Change form prior to the site change deadline**.** The site change deadline is listed on the Exam Cancellation and Site Change form.
- Site change requests must be submitted in writing via U.S. mail or fax, or emailed to testing@ncrahq.org. The Exam Cancellation and Site Change form is available at www.ncra.org/testing.

If a site change request is submitted to NCRA after the deadline, the candidate must be able to provide adequate documentation of the extenuating circumstance necessitating the change. If the candidate is able to provide adequate documentation, every effort will be made to accommodate the request. If the candidate received their exam confirmation after the deadline, NCRA will change the candidate's site without penalty.

SITE CLOSINGS

In the unlikely event a site must close due to elements beyond NCRA's control, all candidates will receive a full refund of their registration fee including the processing fee. Every attempt will be made to accommodate these candidates for future exams.

Questions? Please contact the NCRA Member Services & Information Center at 1-800-272-6272, or the Department of Certification and Testing at testing@ncra.org.

Mail or fax requests to:

NCRA
8224 Old Courthouse Road
Vienna, VA 22182-3808
Fax: 703-556-6291
Attn: Certification and Testing

SKILLS EXAM
CANCELLATION AND SITE CHANGE REQUEST FORM

SKILLS TEST CANCELLATION AND SITE CHANGE DEADLINE: April 27, 2013

Name: _____ **NCRA ID #**: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State/Province:** _____ **Zip/Postal Code:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Exam: ☐ Skills Test – May 4, 2013

☐ **I hereby request a CANCELLATION of my May 4, 2013 skills test and a refund of my registration fee. I have read and understand NCRA's exam cancellation policy. I understand that NCRA will retain a $35.00 non-refundable processing fee.**

or

☐ **I hereby request a SITE CHANGE for my May 4, 2013 skills test. I have read and understand NCRA's site change policy. I understand the site I am requesting may be full, and my request for a site change is final only upon my receipt of a new NCRA Skills Exam Confirmation.**

Change Site from: _____ **Change Site to:** _____

To view the entire exam cancellation and site change policy, please visit the Required Information for Candidates page: http://ncra.org/testing.

If you are requesting a cancellation and refund after the cancellation deadline due to an injury, major illness, family emergency or other extenuating circumstance, please submit back-up documentation with this form. Examples of adequate back-up documentation include, but are not limited to: doctors' notes, obituaries and church bulletins. Please note that processing fees will still be applied. Failure to submit your request with back-up documentation will result in the return of your request without consideration.

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